

Federal Communications Commission



Communications Equity and Diversity Council

**Diversity and Equity Working Group
Workstream 2 Future of Work
Workstream 3 Non-traditional Anchor Institutions**

Adopted: June 15, 2023

Diversity and Equity Workstream 2 Members

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Antonio Tijerino, Hispanic Heritage Foundation, *Workstream 2 Co-Lead*
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Brigitte Daniel Corbin, Wilco Electronics Systems, Inc.
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I. Executive Summary

The work over the past two years from Diversity and Equity Workstreams 2 and 3 culminated in a Digital Ecosystem Forum held on March 6, 2023. The forum focused on the critical skills, education and digital upskilling necessary for individuals to thrive in the digital economy, with a particular emphasis on creating an inclusive and accessible digital ecosystem for diverse populations.

Key findings from the D&E Workstreams 2 and 3 include:

1. The state of the labor market: The transition to remote work and the increasing demand for tech-related jobs were discussed. Strategies such as creative recruitment methods and providing training to individuals without a college degree were recommended to address workforce challenges.
2. Upskilling for new technology jobs: The emergence of new and nascent technology jobs requires a different set of skills. Upskilling programs, widely accepted frameworks for job skills, and public-private partnerships were identified as key solutions to ensure individuals are prepared for future job opportunities.
3. Opportunities in the digital marketplace: Industry experts shared best practices for upskilling, certifications, and apprenticeships to support diverse and underserved communities. The importance of partnerships between industry, academia, government, and local community leaders was emphasized to tailor workforce development programs to community needs.
4. Social infrastructure and ecosystem for worker involvement: Educational institutions, community organizations, and non-traditional anchor institutions were recognized as important partners in upskilling efforts. Collaboration, connectivity, and funding support for these institutions were identified as crucial for addressing the digital divide and providing equitable access to training.

Based on the findings, several recommendations are proposed to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the future of work:

1. Recognize non-traditional anchor institutions: The FCC should encourage the National Telecommunications Information Administration (NTIA) to consider the role of non-traditional anchor institutions in closing the digital divide and providing programmatic and financial support for digital upskilling.
2. Establish a Working Group on digital training: The FCC should create a Working Group focused on digital training, upskilling, and retraining to understand initiatives and organizations supporting workforce development. This group should include representatives from diverse stakeholders, including non-traditional anchor institutions.
3. Maintain an inventory of industry-training resources: The FCC should maintain an inventory of resources and programs that advance workforce opportunities for vulnerable populations. Regular listening sessions or town halls at the local and regional levels can help gather input and improve the training ecosystem.
4. Develop alliances with underrepresented communities: The FCC's Office of Workplace Diversity and its Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau should form alliances with

organizations representing underrepresented communities to address pipeline concerns and promote diversity in the broadband and tech sectors.

Finally, collaboration, connectivity, and partnership are essential to bridge opportunities and stakeholders in the future of work. By implementing the proposed recommendations, the FCC can contribute to a more inclusive and accessible digital ecosystem and support the training and development of a diverse and skilled workforce.

II. Summary of Findings

On March 6, 2023, Diversity and Equity Workstreams 2 and 3 hosted a Digital Ecosystem Forum to engage experts around the critical skills necessary to work, compete, and thrive in the digital economy (*See Appendix for the forum agenda*). During the discussion, the panelists explored the importance of funding organizations that can create a digital ecosystem that is inclusive and accessible to people from diverse backgrounds. This will ensure that individuals facing systemic challenges, such as people of color, LGBTQ+ populations, rural residents, seniors, and those with disabilities, have equal access to technology and can benefit from its use. This report primarily focuses on information shared during the Forum that informed the proposed recommendations to the FCC (or Commission), along with input from the weekly meetings of Diversity and Equity Workstreams 2 and 3.

Panelists at the forum represented a variety of communities from workforce development experts to academicians, and industry professionals tasked with training and placement. The Forum focused on several areas to explore the evolving nature of the workplace, workforce, and critical skills needed from prospective employees:

1. State of the labor market, especially in consideration of the transition from in-person to remote work and more tech-related jobs;
2. Emergence of new and nascent technology jobs that require a different and new set of skills, thus the need for upskilling;
3. Prevalence of opportunities in the new digital marketplace, especially as technology encourages changes in the organization of work and the necessary skill requirements; and
4. Needed social infrastructure and ecosystem that supports worker involvement and engagement in the future of work, especially among diverse, vulnerable populations.

The next section highlights key findings from the Forum.

1. The state of the labor market - considering the transition from in-person to remote work, and more tech-related jobs.

Opening Presentation. During her presentation, Dr. Angela Jackson, CEO of Future Forward Strategies, discussed the opportunity gap in the future of work, and the response by industry and community organizations interested in narrowing such rifts. Dr. Jackson, in her presentation, explained the mismatch in the labor force between burgeoning opportunities in new careers and occupations and the competitiveness among employers to identify and retain workers. To address

this, Dr. Jackson recommended that employers resort to untraditional and more creative ways to recruit and entice prospective applicants, including the use of predictive analytics that help discover talent and have some cadence around the identification and mitigation of algorithmic biases. For example, she mentioned the platform Arena Analytics which has increased hiring and retention rates by deploying artificial intelligence (AI) tools to find non-traditional talent.

Providing training to individuals without a college degree is another strategy for attracting more individuals to existing (and often vacant) technology jobs. Dr. Jackson shared the case study of a company called Chargerhelp that trains individuals to become electric vehicle (EV) charging technicians, an occupation which does not require a four-year degree. The company is now training former Lyft and Uber drivers to be EV technicians and raised more than \$20 million in venture capital and philanthropy to expand its outreach efforts.

However, making training available doesn't guarantee that workers will migrate to these emerging opportunities. In Connecticut, FutureFit AI is partnering with the state, ConneCT, the state's premier job program, and the state's workforce boards to promote training opportunities and train new talent. Since December 2022, 4,000 job seekers have registered for the program and 2,500 workers have been trained, which are primarily from underrepresented backgrounds, did not have a job before, and were not earning a livable wage.

Another case study shared by Dr. Jackson pertained to BlocPower which is leading the charge with greening buildings and creating a green jobs workforce. In partnership with New York City, they are greening buildings in communities that have been plagued by gang and gun violence. Local residents are trained to be HVAC technicians and cloud engineers. To date, 438 buildings have been impacted in NYC.

This presentation set the tone that getting more quality jobs to individuals who have been historically disenfranchised in the workplace and labor market is possible, but it must be done with intention and in partnership with external stakeholders who also understand the potential of widening opportunities. Dr. Jackson also shared that the process for shifting workers to these new economies will require getting in front of the situation in high school when students are considering their career trajectories.

2. The emergence of new and nascent technology jobs that require a different and new set of skills, thus the need for upskilling.

Panel One. The first panel featured a discussion among thought leaders on how innovation has transformed every aspect of our lives and raised awareness about the challenges and opportunities that come along with technological change and the future of work. Generally, the panelists were in agreement with the concerns expressed by Dr. Jackson around the challenges to the future of work based on technological innovation. In particular, speakers explored:

1. How to prepare underserved communities for future changes and challenges and for the future of work;
2. The growing skepticism of AI's use in the workplace and the impact on those who don't understand its function and could be negatively impacted by its results;

3. The challenges and opportunities that exist in the talent upskilling, reskilling and training spaces;
4. How both the private and public sector can work together to educate people and train underserved communities for the future of work; and
5. Tangible solutions to ensure that no one, including those from underserved communities, is left behind when it comes to understanding and being prepared for the future of work.

The findings from this discussion point to the critical role of the FCC to serve as the central federal agency for promoting the employment associated with the media and communications ecosystem. Federal agencies including the FCC must ensure that underrepresented populations are duly represented in the planning that connects the expansion of communications infrastructure with people willing and able to work in this sector.

Other recommendations from this panel discussion are as follows:

1. A need for deliberate upskilling of existing and new entrant technicians.
2. Widely accepted frameworks that conceptualize new jobs and the necessary skills, which are not always defined or determined due to the lack of a comprehensive jobs taxonomy for broadband and other technology sectors.
3. Existing curriculum, programs, and certifications that can be matched with community needs and skills that lead to more tangible information and placements.
4. Private-public partnerships that create better and more comfortable on-ramps into these lucrative industries for underserved and underrepresented communities. “On ramps” should feel comfortable and meet workers where they are, from going into computer science or becoming a fiber installer. They should also be focused on upskilling workers in need of additional competencies.
5. Programs and investments to close the digital divide that remove barriers to entry, and real pathways to computer science and other technical professions that start at an early age (pre-school) and continue through college, e.g., internships and apprenticeships.
6. Better mapping of private and public sector assets to go where the talent is and creating more local opportunities for workers. This also includes the private sector working with trusted community sources to identify prospects at local high schools and colleges.

Overall, the panel found that closing the digital divide is critical to addressing workforce development gaps, and reforming the training and development system to focus on supply and demand are critical to upending traditional workforce development models. Additionally, improvements are needed in the worker climate to ensure that diverse workers feel comfortable with the training for these emerging industries. That is why programs like the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) matter because they help to offset the digital exclusion realities experienced by disenfranchised workers. Finally, the panelists echoed the sentiments of Dr. Jackson on the importance of identifying blind spots in the labor market and narrowing gaps in workforce development and placement. In the end, getting more diverse workers to be more effective in a changing environment requires an all-hands on deck strategy. This strategy must include an assessment of what the new skill requirements are and which stakeholders need to be at the table, such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HCBUs), Hispanic and Tribal-

serving institutions, among others, to motivate populations who have been traditionally excluded from these opportunities.

Going forward, the FCC's Office of Workplace Diversity and Consumer and Governmental Affairs should help develop formal alliances with these and other organizations that have deep roots and relationships within Hispanic, Asian American, Native American, African American, older Americans, those with disabilities, and other underrepresented communities to help with pipeline concerns in the broadband and tech sectors, as well as at the FCC. In fact, an area of opportunity is the expansion of the Commission's summer and year-long internships that could train the next generation of tech policy experts from diverse backgrounds.

3. The prevalence of opportunities in the new digital marketplace, especially as technology encourages changes in the organization of work and the necessary skill requirements.

Panel Two and Panel Three. Panels Two and Three explored the specific role of industry in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion for underserved and underrepresented workers. On Panel Two, industry and government experts shared best practices in upskilling, certifications, apprenticeships, and full-time employment with an eye toward post-secondary talent. The panels also focused on engaging these employers on how to help identify more inclusive talent, recruitment, and provide upskilling opportunities, especially for underserved communities.

To date, more information is needed on the kinds of jobs that will need to be filled in the "future of work" marketplace and the skills assessments. According to The World Economic Forum up to 50 percent of workers will need to add new skills to keep up with the requirements of in-demand careers.¹ Panelists agreed that today's jobs will require some level of technological support, from help desk workers to machine learning engineers. Research suggests that digital skills are needed in two thirds of today's jobs and will be even more necessary going forward because at least a medium to advanced level of digital skills are needed for all jobs that exist today.

For example, the Hispanic Heritage Foundation, a CEDC member, has been working with IBM's signature Global Corporate Responsibility Initiative SkillsBuild to prepare 30 million people by 2030 on a free, online platform to earn digital badges and certificates in 1,000 courses in 19 languages in data science, IT, cloud computing, cybersecurity. Tech skills are not the only competencies needed for these opportunities. Panel Two also examined the non-critical tech skills that employers are looking for, including critical thinking, communication, collaboration with others, problem-solving, and resourcefulness, among other skills. Panelists also shared that digital skill sets need to be paired with human skills like creativity, teamwork, innovation, the things that are irreplaceable from a human point of view.

It is also important that trusted sources of support be included in the skilling of vulnerable workers, and need to include connected, culturally relevant best-in-class organizations such as those that were represented during the Forum, those serving as part of the CEDC, and others that

¹ <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/10/top-10-work-skills-of-tomorrow-how-long-it-takes-to-learn-them/>.

are proximate to the people, to the issues, and can deliver this curriculum in a way that is culturally relevant. While AI has been a game changer in connecting employers to workers, bias and discrimination are prevalent and must be addressed. Finally, the perception that digital skills are too costly to pursue for industry and that the only pathway to get a STEM job is a four-year degree are misconceptions. The magnitude of this perceived barrier becomes clear and in focus when we consider the fact that 65% of U.S. adults over the age of 25 lack a four-year degree, and that those percentages range between 70 to and 80 percent when taking into account underrepresented groups such as Blacks, Latinos and indigenous communities.²

Closing the digital divide is imperative to bringing digital skills to underserved and underrepresented populations. Involving parents in these efforts is also critical. Employers on this panel also suggested that adult learners also be considered, and perhaps experiential learning may be an effective on-ramp to training, especially among community colleges and technical colleges who can develop programs and infrastructure to bring training solutions for underfilled positions in occupations like cybersecurity.

Another point that was made during the panel discussion concerning skills-based training as part of immigration reform, which starts at H1B³ visas, and that the whole of the economy depends on effective and efficient and just and fair immigration systems. Immigrants need to fill jobs that are fundamental to the U.S. economy, which may be a more complicated issue with urgent consequences.

The second industry panel picked up on the sector synergies to support workers entering new digital markets. The discussion made clear that successful workforce development initiatives recognize the value of partnerships between industry, academia, government, and local community leaders. These partnerships can more accurately assess the unique needs of a community and customize workforce development programs that will provide those populations with the digital skills training necessary to succeed in the future workforce. The panel shared the following industry-community examples that demonstrate the effectiveness of this approach:

- Miami Dade County, Florida first examines what jobs employers are looking to fill and then works with universities to create programming that will teach the necessary skills for those jobs. The county then works with community organizations to make sure people are aware of these educational and professional opportunities. These organizations also provide wrap-around services such as transportation and childcare so program participants can focus and succeed with reskilling training. Lastly, the county coordinates with employers to ensure people are connected to jobs upon completion of workforce development programs.

² <https://newsroom.ibm.com/2023-02-14-New-IBM-Survey-Reveals-the-Greatest-Perceived-Barrier-to-Professional-or-Technical-Skill-Development-is-that-the-Programs-are-Too-Expensive> – sharing this source as reference - But there was a global study that found that in the US, 58 percent of respondents worried that digital credentials were too expensive to obtain, 69 percent of career changers believed that they were not qualified to work in these jobs because they lack the right academic degrees, but at the same time, 71 percent of respondents thought that digital credentials are a good way to demonstrate one's skills – so the issue is access.

³ This is a type of visa - <https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/h-1b-specialty-occupations>.

- Mohawk Networks, the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe-owned Internet Service Provider (ISP) located in upstate New York, is focused on providing connectivity to the Mohawk community so students of all ages and small business owners can benefit from next generation technologies. The company partners with their local office of economic development and local colleges and universities to ensure that residents of this rural area have access to distance learning programs to acquire digital skills training.
- The Ohio Governor’s Office of Workforce Transformation created the state’s Broadband & 5G Sector Partnership to ensure the state has a prepared and skilled telecommunications workforce. The partnership between government, industry, and academia designs and launches training programs in career centers, colleges, and universities across Ohio to raise awareness of job opportunities in the broadband industry. The initiative is expected to create tens of thousands of jobs over the next decade.⁴

Raising awareness of the future of work opportunities as early as the K-12 level can make a big impact in diversifying the talent pipeline for a future high-skilled workforce. Exposure to tech jobs from a young age conceptualizes new jobs for the next generation of leaders and highly skilled workers. For example, panelist Allyson Mitchell, General Manager of Mohawk Networks, explained how having a tech company in the Mohawk tribal community sends a message to children that learning the technical skills for building and maintaining a broadband network is an option for them.

Panelist Michael John Green, Deputy Director of Economic Development for Miami Dade County discussed a mentorship partnership between Black county government officials and Florida International University’s Black student union. The partnership facilitates open conversation about the Black experience in the corporate workplace and how to build different career paths. Green mentioned most people fall into similar lines of work as their parents, but he hopes offering students an opportunity to learn about other high-skilled career options sparks an interest in exploring new career paths.

In these and other partnerships, access to high-speed broadband plays an important role in supporting workforce development initiatives and ensuring everyone has equal access to reskilling programs. It also can expand job prospects for people by connecting them to remote work opportunities. But while broadband prices continue to decrease for Americans⁵, many low-income households still lack access to connectivity. Furthermore, the majority of offline households (58%) express no interest or need to be online according to the NTIA’s latest Internet Use Survey.⁶

In this regard, panelists pointed to the importance of the FCC’s ACP⁷, which has been a successful partnership between government and industry to get more low-income households

⁴ BroadbandOhio, “Strengthening Ohio’s Broadband & 5G Workforce,” <https://broadband.ohio.gov/explore-broadband/strengthening-ohios-broadband-5g-workforce>.

⁵ USTelecom, “2022 Broadband Pricing Index,” <https://itgportal.ustelecom.org/research/2022-bpi/>.

⁶ National Telecommunications and Information Administration, “Switched Off: Why Are One in Five U.S. Households Not Online?” <https://www.ntia.doc.gov/blog/2022/switched-why-are-one-five-us-households-not-online>

⁷ See <https://www.fcc.gov/acp>.

connected to broadband. Engagement from local stakeholders is another essential component to increasing ACP enrollment. Mohawk Networks' Allyson Mitchell discussed how her company meets with older members of the Mohawk community to educate them about the ACP and the benefits of having a broadband connection. Panelists emphasized the importance of local governments and community organizations using their platforms as trusted voices within their communities to educate people of all ages on how adopting broadband will open the door to future work opportunities.

The forum demonstrated that many tech firms are increasing their efforts to better align their pressing occupational needs with the existing workforce. More specifically, some ideas that could be gleaned from the conversations with industry are:

- Importance of skills and jobs matching systems that engage employers more deliberately in the process;
- Need to meet workers where they are at all levels – early childhood to adult learners;
- Support of key stakeholders to build an ecosystem in support of digital credentialing that helps employers understand what kind of skills people have and what needs to be further developed;
- More inclusive labor forces that account for immigrants who also need the exposure to existing and emerging opportunities;
- Importance of public-private-community partnerships where companies are committed to diverse talent identification, training, and retention; and
- Importance of continuing programs like the FCC's ACP to increase connectivity, which expands access to job training opportunities.

4. The needed social infrastructure and ecosystem that supports worker involvement and engagement in the future of work, especially among diverse, vulnerable populations.

The forum featured a fireside chat with Dr. Jon Gant, Dean and Professor of School and Library Science, North Carolina Central University (an HBCU). Dr. Gant also serves as a subject matter expert on the CEDC. Dr. Gant emphasized that educational institutions, including community and technical colleges as well as four-year institutions, play a significant role in upskilling. Dr. Gant stated that universities should be considered community anchor institutions. Gant explained that such community anchor institutions are critical partners in upskilling, especially in rural areas with scarce training resources. Further, Dr. Gant indicated that educational institutions can help local communities identify their problems, and can collaborate communities on viable solutions. Dr. Gant explained that he received a large grant to build a broadband network to assist individuals impacted by the digital divide. As part of those efforts, he partnered with a variety of neighborhood churches, schools, and the private sector to work collectively to understand the needs of the community. While this project was effective, Dr. Gant opined that some communities are unable to scale similar efforts due to the lack of funding, which is why collaborations are preferred especially with people who understand the lived experiences of their community residents.

Dr. Gant also provided some realism to local community organizations and educational institutions doing this work. Such proposal developments can be time-consuming, making it more difficult for non-traditional anchor institutions, i.e., faith-based organizations, health clinics, and community-based organizations, to engage in grants to close the digital divide.

Further, stakeholders come with different assets and expertise organizationally, which should be part of the matching process. Dr. Gant suggested that engaging partners in urban areas is often easier than engaging partners in rural areas, which makes training programs more difficult in these locations. In closing, Dr. Gant emphasized the value of focusing on realistic outcomes when attempting to address the digital divide. He noted that it is very important that stakeholders: 1) give themselves sufficient time to do the work; 2) consider the sectors that will be your partners in the efforts; and 3) engage the community and industry to help in that selection process.

Additional takeaways from Dr. Gant’s fireside chat include:

- Make learning and digital upskilling personal to communities by harnessing collaborations with non-profits, agencies, community organizations, and businesses;
- Pursue joint funding and programmatic opportunities for similar or layered projects to find the bandwidth and resources to provide training for the target populations; and
- Secure the appropriate resources working with educational institutions to create, maintain and expand the pipeline and improve digital equity for everyone.

Panel 4. Following this discussion, a more detailed dialogue occurred that was focused on naming and emboldening non-traditional anchor institutions⁸ to support the training and development of digitally underrepresented and underserved communities. The panel entitled “*How Are Non-Traditional Anchor Institutions Accelerating Digital Adoption and Upskilling,*” featured representatives from Puede Network, Diversify Architecture, Hurston Institute, the Asian Business Collaboration, and the Multicultural Media Telecom and Internet Council.

Nontraditional anchor institutions offer a familiar, safe community to the digitally underserved of our society to foster conversation, gain support, and access resources to develop skills, innovation and community. Many of these organizations have been doing this work for a long time through grit and conviction – not necessarily funding. In particular, churches, hair salons, and other such groups, and organizations represented on the panel were conducting their work locally and being creative in their targeted communities for hundreds of years. The lack of recognition of their important and critical role as part of national efforts to close the digital divide has been disappointing.

⁸ A non-traditional anchor institution refers to an organization or entity that plays a significant role in the economic and social development of a community but does not fit the conventional definition of an anchor institution. Traditionally, anchor institutions are large, stable entities such as universities, hospitals, or government agencies that have a long-term presence in a community and contribute to its stability and growth. Non-traditional anchor institutions, on the other hand, may include a diverse range of organizations that have a substantial impact on the community in unconventional ways. These institutions can be smaller in scale or operate in sectors beyond education, healthcare, or government.

Some of the challenges mentioned by the panelists that nontraditional anchor institutions face when serving their community include:

- The societal perception that their members automatically lack resources and funding and cannot actively participate in upskilling conversations.
- The lack of affordable technology.
- Language barriers with reaching the digitally underserved community where they live, work, and attend school.
- The lack of representation from the digitally underserved community when it comes to the leadership of company and organizational partners.

After hearing from non-traditional anchor institutions and larger organizations targeting underserved communities, it is clear that what is needed is a new framework that facilitates both funding and opportunities for these less-recognized institutions that continue to do the work of local communities and residents.

Some of the ideas mentioned by panelists include:

- Continue and expand initiatives and partnerships between the government and industry to make digital technology and online access both affordable and available to all communities. As part of this effort, include systematic examination of a community's possible barriers to access, such as language, fiber, or costs; and regularly include community representation in both the examinations and solution building decisions.
- Continue and expand initiatives to diversify employees and especially leaders in government, digital industries and academia.

Of course, there are obstacles that impede the progression of such ideas mentioned by the panelists which the FCC should put on their radar, including:

- **Bandwidth of partners** and partnerships with non-traditional anchor institutions and, or other non-profits, who are often stressed by the plethora of roles and responsibilities they have in their local footprints. While such partnerships will help recognize these organizations and institutions for the work they do, the significant framework change factor here is providing concrete additional opportunities for them to participate in providing services to their communities to address digital upskilling and digital literacy.
- **Limited vision** among corporate, and some non-profits about how to leverage the expertise of non-traditional anchor institutions. As a result, inadequate resources go to these organizations who are already working to support some of the same goals.

III. Conclusion

The March forum revealed lessons about how to bridge opportunities and stakeholders in the future of work, and what organizations/institutions are missing at the table in discussions focused on creating more inclusive workforces and training. The convening also demonstrated that previous obstacles to funding should be addressed and that non-traditional anchor institutions must be funded to continue to creatively tackle local barriers to entry to skills training and work.

In the end, the major themes from the forum stressed the importance of collaboration, connectivity, and partnership.

Over the course of the two-year charter, the lessons from the March forum along with regular weekly meetings have helped to expand our perspective on what will be needed to identify, train, and retain the next generation of tech and telecom workers. Clearly, it will not be a one-size-fits-all solution, but rather one that enrolls a variety of partners who come to the problem with different capacities and approaches to ensuring digital equity and more inclusive approaches to including diverse populations in the future of work.

IV. Recommendations to the FCC

Recommendation One: The FCC should encourage the National Telecommunications Information Administration to consider non-traditional anchor institutions as important to the national efforts to close the digital divide and generate the appropriate support (programmatic and financial) for digital upskilling. These are activities that are eligible for funding under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act’s \$2.75 billion Digital Equity Programs⁹

Actions:

- A. The FCC should share this report, the overview of the forum held on March 6, 2023, and other key information related to non-traditional anchor institutions in communities across the country with NTIA.
- B. The FCC should work to create interagency communication with NTIA around digital divide and digital upskilling to share information and best practices. Ultimately, this will increase the agency’s ability to meet communities where they are and provide the resources that will make the biggest difference.

Recommendation Two: The FCC should formalize a Working Group on digital training, upskilling, and retraining among early childhood and adult learners and workers to ensure a willing and able workforce from historically disenfranchised populations.

Actions:

- A. The FCC or the next charter of the CEDC should be tasked with the creation of an official Working Group on digital training, upskilling and retraining to help the FCC and other government agencies understand and assist states and localities across the country. This Working Group should be hyper-focused on understanding what initiatives, organizations, community leaders, non-traditional anchor institutions and other community-based organizations across the country are doing to ensure community members can live, work, grow and be empowered regardless of where they live.
- B. The FCC should refer to the March 6, 2023, forum for examples of non-traditional organizations that should participate in this Working Group.

⁹ Congress.gov. “H.R.3684 - 117th Congress (2021-2022): Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act,” Div. F, Pub. L. 117-58 (Nov. 15, 2021), <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/3684/text>.

- a. The CEDC Diversity and Equity Working Group strongly suggests that support be provided to newly formed working groups and all working groups on the full process of working in an FCC appointed advisory committee. Organizations that could serve the FCC and American public for the first time can provide invaluable grassroots information but will require the expertise of the FCC to help ensure they can deliver the work product in an appropriate way.

Recommendation Three: The FCC or the next charter of the CEDC should maintain an inventory of industry-training resources and programs that advance workforce opportunities for vulnerable populations and continue to gather annually the diverse stakeholders, including non-traditional anchor institutions to discuss ways to improve the training ecosystem.

Actions:

- A. The FCC should consider regularly scheduled listening sessions or town halls at the local and regional levels to better understand how communities, in partnership with industry and government, are preparing populations for the future of work in digital jobs.

Recommendation Four: The FCC's Office of Workplace Diversity and its Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau should help develop formal alliances with these and other organizations that have deep roots and relationships within Hispanic, Asian American, Native American, African American, Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (AANHPI), LGBTQ+ and other underrepresented communities to help with pipeline concerns in the broadband and tech sectors, as well as at the FCC.

Actions:

- A. The FCC should continue to expand alliances with Non-Governmental Organizations, non-traditional anchor institutions and other community-based organizations with groups outlined in the recommendations and more to ensure the FCC has a clear understanding of the needs of these communities at all times and can call on these community sectors to share and disseminate information.
- B. Additionally, the FCC should create and audit of existing summer and year-long internships to ensure retention of students from diverse backgrounds.

APPENDIX



Digital Ecosystem Forum

Sponsored by the
Communications Equity and Diversity Council
Diversity and Equity Working Group

Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

March 6, 2023
12:00 noon – 4:30 p.m. ET

VIRTUAL FORUM AGENDA

** indicates a member of the Communications Equity and Diversity Council*

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 12:00 pm | Introduction
Diana Coho, Consumer Affairs and Outreach Specialist
Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, CEDC |
| | Welcome Remarks and Introduction of the Opening Speaker
Christopher Wood, Executive Director
LGBT Technology and Partnership Institute*
CEDC Diversity and Equity Working Group Chair |
| 12:05 pm | Opening Remarks
FCC Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel |
| 12:10 pm | Presentation: “Current Landscapes of the Future of Work and Impacts on Underserved Communities”
Dr. Angela Jackson, Founder
Future Forward Strategies |

12:20 pm

Panel 1: Your Role in the Digital Ecosystem

Moderator

Rosa Mendoza, Founder, President and CEO
ALLvanza*

Panelists

Brigitte Daniel Corbin, CEO
Wilco Electronics Systems, Inc.*

Andreen Soley, Director
Public Interest Technology
New America

Antonio Tijerino, President and CEO
Hispanic Heritage Foundation*

1:10 pm

Panel 2: Companies' Roles and Efforts to Upskill the Workers of Tomorrow

Moderator:

Antonio Tijerino, President and CEO
Hispanic Heritage Foundation*

Panelists:

Michelle D. Gilliard, Ph.D.
Corporate Social Responsibility Leader
IBM Americas

Anisa Green, Director, Federal Regulatory
Chief of Staff – EVP, Federal Regulatory Relations & Chief
Regulatory Officer, Corporate External & Legislative Affairs
AT&T Services, Inc.*

Hector Mujica, Head of Economic Opportunity
Google.org, Americas

2:00 pm

Panel 3: Public and Private Sector Synergy to Employ the Workers of Tomorrow

Moderator:

Jenna Alsayegh, Senior Director of Strategic Initiatives &

USTelecom*

Michaeljohn Green, Deputy Director of Economic Development
Miami, Dade County

Partnerships

Allyson Mitchell, General Manager
Mohawk Networks

2:50 pm

FORUM BREAK

3:00 pm

Fireside Chat: “The Role of Non-Traditional Anchor Institutions”

Moderator:

Melody Spann Cooper, Chair and CEO
Midway Broadcasting Corporation*

Guest Speaker:

Dr. Jon Gant, Dean, School of Library and Information Sciences
North Carolina Central University*
Subject Matter Expert, Digital Empowerment and Inclusion
Working Group, CEDC

3:20 pm

Panel 4: How Are Non-Traditional Anchor Institutions Accelerating Digital Adoption and Upskilling

Moderators:

Aama Nahuja, Legal Counsel
A Wonder Media Company, LLC*

Dr. Cathy Schubert, Fellow
American Geriatric Society*

Panelists:

Adan Gonzalez, Founder
Puede Network

Jake Heffington, Executive Director
Diversify Architecture

Dr. Yolanda Majors, Founder and CEO
Hurston Institute

Kristelle Siarza, Owner/CEO of Siarza
Founder, Asian Business Collaboration

Dr. Fallon Wilson, Vice President of Policy
Multicultural Media Telecom and Internet Council

4:10 pm

Additional Resources for Upskilling and Anchor Institutions

Charlyn Stanberry, Vice President, Government Relations
National Association of Broadcasters*

Antonio Tijerino, President and CEO
Hispanic Heritage Foundation*

4:20 pm

Closing Remarks

Christopher Wood, Executive Director
LGBT Technology and Partnership Institute*
CEDC Diversity and Equity Working Group Chair

Jamila Bess Johnson, Designated Federal Officer
Communications Equity and Diversity Council
Media Bureau